

Peace Day In The Schools



BY

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ISSUED BY

DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOLS

M. P. SHAWKEY, STATE SUPERINTENDENT

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The most dishonored word in the English language is honor. Fifty or sixty years ago honor would have required you to march as Hamilton did to meet Aaron Burr. Today the gentleman belonging to the race that speaks the English tongue would be degraded if he fought a duel. Honor has changed. So with nations. As long as the Republic herself acts honorably she remains stainless. Who abolished the duel? Our English-speaking race. Let us now take the next step forward and abolish international duels; let us have the Nation's differences settled by the supreme court of humanity.

—ANDREW CARNEGIE—

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The eighteenth day of May is the date for the tenth annual celebration of Peace Day in the schools. Throughout a large part of the country this day is celebrated with appropriate exercises. It is especially important that there should be a widespread observance the present year because so many current events have to do with war and peace among the nations. The teachers of the state should observe this day where it is at all possible. In a circular letter Hon. M. P. Shawkey, State Superintendent of Schools, who is also president of the West Virginia branch of the School Peace League, urges the observance of the day:

“How fitting it is that the schools should take the lead in teaching the new doctrine of a world-wide brotherly love and that the teachers should emphasize in one great lesson the white-winged victories of peace in contrast to the blood-bought victories of war.

“What about lesson materials? Fortunately that question is easily answered. Upon request your State Superintendent of Schools will send the excellent Peace Day program prepared by Dr. Robert A. Armstrong of our University; or Mrs. Fannie Fern Andrews, Secretary of the American School Peace League, 402 Marlborough St., Boston, Mass., will send a package of literature upon request; or the Peace Day Bulletin published by Dr. P. P. Claxton, U. S. Commissioner of Education, may be had at the rate of \$30 per thousand from Mrs. Andrews or from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C.”

Retrospect and Outlook

Looking back on the war and peace events of the last year, a lover of peace must feel unusual gratification. The year has seen the close of a very brutal war in southeastern Europe; but the struggle was just the evening up of old scores for which “the powers” were responsible half a century ago. The Balkan war is a horrible object lesson eloquent for peace. The civil war in Mexico is less important; such domestic strife must be expected, but in the years to come there will be an international police force to look after such quarrels. However, the most significant events of the year have been full of promise of final peace. They make a most interesting and hopeful catalog:

A great temple of justice has been dedicated at the Hague for the use of all the nations of the world.

The meeting of the Twentieth International Peace Congress at the Hague in August, when delegates from the chief nations of the world discussed questions relating to peace on earth and good will among men.

Many distinguished statesmen have spoken messages of hope for those who realize the blighting effects of militarism in the world.

Honorable Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty of Great Britain, declared for an international "naval holiday" of one year.

The House of Representatives of the United States endorsed by a vote of 317 to 11, on December 8, 1913, the suggestion of a "naval holiday," a year during which all the nations should rest from building battleships.

Arrangements have been made for a joint celebration by the United States and England of a hundred years of peace along the boundary of the United States and Canada, the most extended inland international boundary line in the world.

New arbitration treaties have been concluded between the United States and eight of the great European nations.

The Church Peace Union has been organized, and endowed by Andrew Carnegie with a fund of ten million dollars. Its active work will be inaugurated by the delivery of thousands of peace sermons from the pulpits of America on the 17th day of May.

Special treaties, after a new plan, have been concluded by the United States with thirteen other countries, and many other nations have received the suggestion for such treaties favorably. This plan proposed by Secretary of State Bryan inserts in the treaties of the usual form a clause stating that when any controversy arises which either of the contracting powers does not desire to submit to arbitration a commission of inquiry shall be appointed to investigate and make report of the facts in the case, no acts of hostility to be committed by either of the powers in the meantime.

The eighteenth conference of the Interparliamentary Union was held at the Hague on September 3, 4, and 5. This organization of 3,600 accredited members of the parliaments of the world had its beginning in 1889 and is one of the most significant and well known agencies making for international peace. Its members are the law makers of the different countries of the world. Over three hundred delegates were in attendance at this meeting.

Arrangements have been made for the meeting of the Second Universal Races Congress in Paris in 1915. The object of this organization is to cultivate inter-racial concord and understanding. Through it the world may learn that men are not necessarily enemies because they differ in complexions, clothes, and languages.

The outlook is not at all discouraging for the friends of ultimate universal peace and the early reduction of expenditures for armament in times of peace. Startling revelations as to the criminal cupidity of the gun forgers and powder makers of Germany and France should open the eyes of the easy-going but burdened tax-payers of the world. The hired agents of the German manufacturers of war materials were caught stirring up a demonstration in France that would rouse a war scare in Germany and so call for greater expenditure for armament. There is no question that the armament makers of different countries do a reciprocal business in manufacturing war scares by hired agents. The United States, however, is furnished with some statesmen of such emotional and frantic temperament that there is no need of calling for foreign help. But more and more the people of the United States are learning that they do not need to wait for other nations in order to put offensive armaments out of commission. There is no nation in the world that is anxious to make war on us. We are looked upon as being peculiarly in a position to lead the great world peace movement. Our attitude should be not to look for a quarrel, not to feel fear of being attacked, and not to carry weapons to provoke our neighbors.

There is hope in the record of the Balkan war. Any people that could look soberly upon the statistics of destruction of that struggle and then favor war is ripe for the foolkiller. Here are some appalling figures:

Servia, with an army of 400,000, lost 71,000 men; Greece, with an army of 300,000, lost 48,000; Montenegro lost 11,200 out of an army of 30,000; Bulgaria, 156,000, out of an army of 600,000. Out of 1,330,000 combatants, 286,200 were killed or wounded, or 21.5 per cent of the male population. If one makes an identical calculation for each of the four countries the result is: Montenegro, 37.3 per cent.; Bulgaria, 26 per cent; Servia, 17.7 per cent; and Greece, 16 per cent. These figures are absolutely staggering.

The words of the most distinguished statesmen of the world show that the wanton waste of war and of the reckless preparation for war can not much longer be tolerated in civilized countries. Mr. Lloyd George, the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, calls this reckless

expenditure of the nations "organized insanity." He continues, "No country has gained in strength as a result of this growth of expenditure. We are all relatively exactly where we were. I can not think of any advantage which has been reaped by any country in the world from this increase of military and naval expenditure. But I can think of a good deal of harm which has been done to all countries. The commonsense of the industrial classes, be they capitalists or laborers, has risen against this organized insanity. This is a propitious moment for reconsidering the question of armaments."

When the Hensley resolution endorsing the "naval holiday" suggestion of the Hon. Winston Churchill, was passed by the United States House of Representatives, many eloquent speeches were delivered in support of the resolution. These show that our statesmen are awake to the call of the twentieth century on the question of peace and the fatuous, foolish folly of extravagant preparations for war in time of peace.

Congressman Heflin said: "The armor-plate trust and the steel trust, which constitute the ship-builders' trust are forever urging Congress to build more battleships. Millions of the people's money are expended building one battleship after another, and the same interests in America that profit greatly whenever we build a battleship send their agents abroad to urge other nations to build more battleships because America is doing so. They sell materials to this and other countries. I am told that whenever we order the building of a new battleship this ship-builders' trust makes a photograph of it and takes it to England and France and Germany. The picture is exhibited to these foreign powers, and they are told that they had better build more battleships because America has just ordered a new one to be built. And on it goes."

Congressman Bailey said: "I believe in a naval holiday, not for one year, but for all time."

Congressman Gray used these words: "Few men today will realize the full meaning or true significance of this movement. Few men today will comprehend the effect upon human society or the change to be wrought in the affairs of nations. I believe that this movement will mark a new era in the history of civilized men. I believe that the human race will here turn from strife and mortal combat, from gore and carnage, from the bloody shambles of the past, from wanton destruction, from the slaughter of the innocent and the awful

waste of human life—turn to mutuality of human effort, to a glorious future of peace and good will.”

Congressman Hamlin said: “Shall we decline to pass resolutions so just and so proper simply because, forsooth, some nation may decline to accept it—that our proposition may be rejected and we humiliated? We can not be humiliated in trying to do right. We may not get it accepted in 1914. If not, let us try in the good year 1915. And if we fail then, try again in the good year 1916. We ought not to be weary in well doing. I believe as firmly as I believe I am standing here that there is coming a time when we shall have universal peace.”

Congressman Sisson said: “If history teaches me anything, it teaches me that no government was ever preserved by enormous armies and by enormous taxes. We must live with our neighbor nations, and if we mean peace, we must take the first step which leads us toward peace. We can not cry, ‘Peace! Peace!’ and at the same time be preparing and standing for war, war, war.”

It would be a good plan for those teachers who find it possible to conduct a Peace Day program to follow the program suggested in the pamphlet prepared by the writer of this article, a pamphlet which they may get from State Superintendent Shawkey, as has been suggested above. They will find abundant materials, poems, short prose passages, songs, etc., which may be arranged for an exercise of whatever length they please.

